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ABSTRACT

The concept "Jewish Poor" is defined simply as Jewish households (viz. households containing one or more persons defined as Jewish) whose total household cash income (1969, comparable to U.S. Census) was under 4000 dollars. The data were obtained from four sources: (1) analysis of "Jewish Poor" drawn from Los Angeles phase of National Jewish Population Study; (2) geographic analysis of Jewish Federation Council Passover List containing presumably low-income Jewish households, and geographic re-analysis of American Jewish Committee raw data of public aid recipients; (3) qualitative insights obtained by volumteer Beverly-Fairfax, California neighborhood survey and by earlier Menorah Housing Study street interviews; and, (4) U.S. Census data for selected areas. It is estimated that the number of Jewish poor persons in Los Angeles is slightly above 55,000. These Jewish poor reside in 30,000 households; institutional population is not separately considered in this study. In general, the Jewish poor reside in the older areas of the Jewish population settlement in Los Angeles. About one-half of Jewish poor households are located in such neighborhoods. But the remainder are scattered widely throughout the City and County. In large measure, the Jewish poor are "old-time" settlers of Los Angeles. (Author/JM)

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# "Low Income" - Levels in the Jewish Population:

# The "Jewish Poor" in Los Angeles

## A Summary of Findings

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How the data were obtained:

(1.) Analysis of "Jewish Poor" drawn from Los Angeles phase of National Jewish Population Study;

(2.) Geographic analysis of JFC Passover List containing presumably low-income Jewish households, and geographic re-analysis of American Jewish Committee raw data of public aid recipients;

(3.) Qualitative insights obtained by volunteer Beverly-Fairfax neighborhood survey and by earlier Menorah Housing Study street interviews;

(4.) U.S. Census data for selected areas.

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'Caveats Practitioner':

(A) For the most part, (particularly in (1.), data were not collected specifically for a study of Jewish Poor; thus sample distribution and other technical aspects are not ideal (though probably adequate) in study of Jewish Poor.

(B) In the present context, the concept Jewish Poor is defined simply as Jewish households (viz. households containing one or more persons defined as Jewish) whole total household cash income (1969, comparable to U.S. Census) was under $4,000. There is no consideration in this definition of net worth, equity in home or any other assets, nor does the term Jewish Poor itself denote any particular condition of social need.

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I. How many Jewish Poor?

It is estimated that the number of Jewish Poor persons in Los Angeles is slightly above 55,000. These Jewish Poor reside in some 30,000 households; (institutional population is not separately considered in this study).

The following is the relevant household income distribution (Table I)

| | Jewish households survey data, % | Jewish households elim. 'no data..'% | | L.A. County 70 Census,% |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| under $ 4,000 | 13.8 | 17.8 | | 11.7 |
| 4,000 - 5,999 | 2.9 | 3.7 | | 8.8 |
| 6,000 - 9,999 | 9.8 | 12.6 | | 23.3 |
| 10,000 - 13,999 | 13.5 | 17.4 | | 22.7 |
| 14,000 - 19,999 | 12.0 | 15.5 | -48.4 | -33.5 |
| 20,000 - 29,999 | 13.2 | 17.0 | | |
| 30,000, up | 12.3 | 15.9 | | |
| no data/income | 22.6 | xx | | - |
| | 100.0** | 100.0 | | 100.0 |

Median Jewish household income, about $13,700 is some 25% above general L.A. County household income of $11,000. However, we may note that the proportion of households in the Jewish population at either extreme of the income distribution exceeds the proportion in the general L.A. County population. As will be seen later, the higher proportion of Jewish aged is, in part responsible to the relative disproportionality at the low end of the scale.

The estimate of some 30,000 Jewish Poor households is derived as follows:

estimated number of Jewish households, Los Angeles area: 172,081
proportion, under $4,000, above: 17.8%
estimate Jewish Poor households (17.8% x 172,081) = 30,630

The estimate of some 55,000 Jewish Poor persons is derived as follows:

30,630 Jewish Poor households with an average (mean) household size of 1.81 = 55,440 persons.

Average household size of Jewish Poor is considerably smaller than (already significantly declined) average household size of total Jewish population.

* some missing data ('no data...') in this and subsequent tables may be added in final revised tabulations, and results may be adjusted accordingly.

** percentages may not add to exactly 100.0 due to statistical rounding.

xx 'no data' eliminated from distribution.

II. What are the ages of the Jewish Poor?

The highest proportions (and number) of Jewish Poor are

(a) aged, 65 years old and up (22%), (plus 16% not reporting age, many of whom are presumed to be aged)

(b) in late adulthood (but not aged), 50-64 years old (30%)

(c) teen-agers associated with parents in late adulthood (23%)

There are few Jewish Poor in the major productive years, 30-49 (less than 2%) and few young children, 14 or under, in Jewish Poor households (2%).

Age data are shown in Table II:

| | Jewish Poor persons % | Jewish Poor persons number * | Total Jewish persons % | is Jewish Poor % larger (+) or smaller (-) than total Jewish person %? |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| under 4 | .5 | 277 | 2.4 | - |
| 5 - 14 | 1.6 | 887 | 11.5 | - |
| 15 - 19 | 22.7 | 12,585 | 11.0 | + |
| 20 - 29 | 5.7 | 3,160 | 12.4 | - |
| 30 - 39 | .8 | 444 | 8.2 | - |
| 40 - 49 | .5 | 277 | 14.0 | - |
| 50 - 59 | 25.3 | 14,026 | 17.1 | + |
| 60 - 64 | 4.7 | 2,606 | 7.0 | - |
| 65 - 74 | 10.3 | 5,710 | 7.4 | + |
| 75, up | 12.1 | 6,708 | 4.0 | + |
| no data/age | 15.8 | 8,760 | 4.8 | + |
| | 100.0 | 55,440 | 100.0 | |

Jewish aged persons, with reported ages 65 and up, number about 12,400. Including as aged - by way of adjusted estimate one-half of those giving no age data - the corresponding figure increases to about 16,800.

The middle-years, late adulthood group, 50-64, includes some 16,600 Jewish Poor persons, and the mid/late teen group (including some college students, no doubt) some 12,600.

* these numbers are not to be taken literally, of course, they are approximations and are shown as basis for computation.

III. What is the household composition of the Jewish Poor?

Almost one-third of Jewish Poor households (some 9,600) are one-person households. More than 40% (13,230) involve arrangements of household heads living with their children only (but lacking a spouse). Some 14% (4,300) are couples (spouses only, no children in household). The following (Table III-A) provides the statistical comparison:

| | Jewish Poor % | total Jewish households % | is Jewish Poor % larger (+) or smaller (-) than total Jewish household %? |
|---|---|---|---|
| household head lives... | | | |
| alone | 31.4 | 22.8 | + |
| with children only | 43.2 | 10.6 | + |
| with spouse only | 14.1 | 33.5 | - |
| with spouse and children | 4.3 | 29.0 | - |
| with relatives only | 1.6 | .7 | + |
| with unrelated only | 4.9 | 1.3 | + |
| all other | .5 | 2.1 | - |
| | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

The question as to the extent to which Jewish Poor households are headed by females is explored in Table III-B; it is apparent that female household heads predominate significantly among the Jewish Poor:

| | Jewish Poor female heads % | total Jewish households female heads % | is Jewish Poor % larger (+) or smaller (-) than total Jewish household %? |
|---|---|---|---|
| household head lives... | | | |
| alone | 26.6 of 31.4 | 11.3 of 22.8 | + |
| with children only | 43.5 of 43.5 | 9.1 of 10.6 | + |
| with spouse only | .5 of 14.1 | 5.1 of 33.5 | - |
| with spouse & children | .5 of 4.3 | .3 of 29.0 | + |
| with relatives only | 1.1 of 1.6 | .6 of .7 | + |
| with unrelated/other | x | x | |
| all households | 73.4 of 100.0 | 26.9 of 100.0 | + |

x insufficient data

IV. How rooted in Los Angeles are the Jewish Poor?

In large measure, the Jewish Poor are 'old-time' settlers of Los Angeles. The following brief Table IV-A supports this contention:

| | Jewish Poor household heads, % | total Jewish household heads, % | is Jewish Poor % larger (+) or smaller (-) than total Jewish household %? |
|---|---|---|---|
| came to Los Angeles... | | | |
| 1929 or prior | 48.7 | 19.6 | + |
| * | | | |
| 1966 or later | 7.5 | 14.0 | - |

Further substantiation of the 'early-settler syndrome'is provided by the proportion of Jewish Poor households in which 'some Yiddish' (broad definition!) is, on occasion, spoken ... 77.8% in Jewish Poor households vs. 49.7% in Jewish households generally.

The geographic pattern of settlement of Jewish Poor, with remnants of formerly-thriving Jewish neighborhoods still existing in now largely Chicano or Black areas (Boyle Heights, West Adams) provides additional evidence in this connection.

V. Is 'rootedness' an economic asset?

The fact that Jewish Poor tend to be well-rooted in Los Angeles serves in part to offset the direct negative economic consequences of their current low income. Home ownership for instance, (inferentially with mortgages well paid down), is unexpectedly high -- nearly on par with total Jewish households, 51 vs. 52%. (This, incidentally, compares to a general Los Angeles County-wide figure of some 47%.)

The homes in which Jewish Poor homeowners live are more modest than homes in the total Jewish population (median property value, estimate by owner): $30,000 vs. $52,400. (Both of these figures are considerably above the general Los Angeles County-wide figure of $24,300.) Thus, homeownership serves as an economic 'cushion' for a sizeable proportion of the Los Angeles Jewish Poor.

* 1930-1965 not shown

VI. But what about those who rent?

Those who rent, - some 15,000 Jewish Poor households, - pay a median rent of $125 per month, contrasted with a median rent figure of $195 in the total Jewish population. (The general Los Angeles County figure is $110.)

It is apparent that for Jewish Poor, rent represents an exceptionally high proportion of total cash income. Even assuming an annual income figure at the top of the range, at $4,000, with annual rental cost amounting to $1,500, a minimum 37.5% of income is committed to housing expense. This contrasts with some 18% for the total Jewish population. Thus, rent may be a problem for a sizeable group of Jewish Poor, absorbing a very large slice of their money income dollar.

VII. Any plans to move?

Jewish Poor tend to stay put. Table VII shows the relevant figures:

| | Jewish Poor households % | Total Jewish households % | is Jewish Poor % larger (+) or smaller (-) than total Jewish household %? |
|---|---|---|---|
| no plans to move indicated* | 93.5 | 82.3 | + |
| now making definite plans to move | 1.6 | 2.2 | - |
| plans to move within 1 yr. | 3.8 | 5.6 | - |
| plans to move 1-5 yrs. | 1.1 | 9.9 | - |
| | 100.0 | 100.0 | |
| (any moving plans) | (6.5) | (17.7) | |

Age and old-time settlement no doubt are key factors related to this disinclination to move.

* including 'don't know', 'no answer', etc.

VIII. To work or not to work?

The vast preponderance of Jewish Poor household heads are not in the labor force, nor are they looking for work. They are, for the most part, retired or ill, or aged non-working housewives. Here is how the picture looks in numbers (Table VIII-A):

| | Jewish Poor household heads % | Total Jewish household heads % | is Jewish Poor % larger (+) or smaller (-) than total Jewish household %? |
|---|---|---|---|
| working | 17.3 | 70.4 | - |
| not working | | | |
| ill, or otherwise unable to work | 43.2 | 6.0 | + |
| retired | 27.0 | 13.6 | + |
| non-working student | 1.6 | .4 | + |
| other non-working or no info. re work status | 10.9 | 9.6 | + |
| total non-working | 82.7 | 29.6 | + |
| | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Even those Jewish Poor household heads who do work are gainfully employed fewer hours per week, and in less skilled occupations than household heads in the total Jewish population, see Table VIII-B:

| | Jewish Poor household heads - employed only % | Total Jewish household heads - employed only % | is Jewish Poor % larger (+) or smaller (-) than total Jewish household %? |
|---|---|---|---|
| working less than 30 hrs./wk. | 8.7 | 4.3 | + |
| managers/professionals ('high status') | 12.5 | 48.6 | - |
| service/operatives, craftsmen/labor ('low status') | 43.2 | 11.8 | + |
| | * | * | |

* no total, figures not additive

IX. What about the education level?

The education level of Jewish Poor household heads, on the whole, is low. The following excerpts from more detailed education data, ('highest grade attended') make the point; see Table IX:

| | Jewish Poor household heads % | Total Jewish household heads % | is Jewish Poor % larger (+) or smaller (-) than total Jewish household %? |
|---|---|---|---|
| college grad, or beyond | 3.3 | 37.1 | - |
| attended 6 - 9th grade only | 17.3 | 6.4 | + |
| never attended school | 2.7 | .9 | + |

It is evident that, even for potential part-time employment on part of those poor who are not working now but who might work some time in the future, the education level does not bespeak an encouraging potential. Future employment no doubt would be confined for the most part to low-skill occupations.

X. Are Jewish Poor associated with temples and organizations?

For the most part, they are not; see Table X:

| | Jewish Poor household heads % | Total Jewish household heads % | is Jewish Poor % larger (+) or smaller (-) than total Jewish household %? |
|---|---|---|---|
| belongs to Temple | 10.8 | 23.3 | - |
| belongs to Jewish organization (s) | 16.8 | 29.6 | - |
| belongs to general organization (s) | 8.2 | 36.3 | - |

In this context, one may wonder about the issue of "alienation". While temple and organization membership are not necessarily sure-fire antidotes to personal alienation, it seems clear the Jewish Poor are even more marginal to active involvement in the community's social/organizational stream than most other Jewish household heads. In Los Angeles even these manifest low levels of involvement, further highlighting the remote, isolated status of the Los Angeles Jewish Poor.

XI. Are Jewish Poor aware of Jewish community agencies?

By their very nature, Jewish community agencies vary in degree of visibility ... those with buildings, for instance, tend to be most visible. Still, awareness of agencies by Jewish Poor brings some surprises, see Table XI:

| | Jewish Poor respond-ents % | Total Jewish respond-ents % | is Jewish Poor % larger(+) or smaller (-) than total J.household %? | rank: Jewish Poor respond-ents | rank: total Jewish respond-ents |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| knows that there is... | | | | | |
| Jewish hospital | 77.3 | 66.6 | + | 1 | 1 |
| Jewish home for aged | 34.1 | 63.4 | - | 2 | 2 |
| Jewish center | 24.3 | 49.4 | - | 3 | 3 |
| Jewish family service | 17.8 | 40.9 | - | 4 | 4 |
| Jewish community rel. agency | 16.8 | 37.1 | - | 5 | 5 |
| Jewish child care agcy. | 14.1 | 26.7 | - | 7 | 6 |
| Jewish vocational service | 14.6 | 23.6 | - | 6 | 7 |

The high rate of awareness of the hospital is, perhaps, not overly unexpected, the hospital is the only facility relatively better known by Jewish Poor than by Jewish respondents at large. However, the home for the aged, which - in view of the Jewish Poor's older age pattern - might be assumed to be of special interest to them, though indeed in second place, shows a comparatively low percent of awareness, especially when contrasted with the wide-spread awareness of this facility in the total Jewish population.

The relative paucity in awareness of many agencies is an additional bit of evidence suggesting the 'alienation' condition noted earlier.

XII. Where are the Jewish Poor?

The answer: in some identifiable geographic areas, but also all over.

In general, the Jewish Poor reside in the older areas of Jewish population settlement in Los Angeles. Something like one-half of Jewish Poor households are located in such neighborhoods. But the remainder are scattered widely throughout the City and County; (see Map, page 13).

A necessary technical note: We may define a 'full-fledged Jewish Poverty Area' as one in which one or more percent of all presumably poor Jewish households are to be found (according to both the American Jewish Committee, Index A, data and according to the Passover List, Index B), and in which these proportions exceed the corresponding proportion of total Jewish households. Translation: areas in which there appear to be disproportionately many and fairly substantial total numbers of Jewish Poor. Still, 'full-fledged Jewish Poverty Areas' typically contain many other households, Jewish and non-Jewish, who are not to be classified as 'poor'.

Seventeen zip code areas (as marked - not rated - x in the Geographic Distribution, Table XII) so qualify as 'full-fledged Jewish Poverty Areas'; they are part of the following larger areas:

Westside - Central (viz. Beverly-Fairfax, etc.)
Westside - South (viz. Wilshire-Fairfax, toward West Adams, etc.)
Wilshire Area
McArthur Park - Downtown Area
East Hollywood - Temple St.
Central Hollywood
Parts of North Hollywood
Parts of Van Nuys
Parts of Reseda
Boyle Heights

Ocean Park-Venice does not technically qualify, and may be in process of change, and/or may contain marginally-Jewish and otherwise hard-to-identify Jewish Poor.

Major areas geographically identifiable, though containing some zip codes other than those denoted as 'full-fledged Jewish Poverty Areas', according to a rough arithmetic Mean Index derived from Indexes A and B, contain near 59% of Jewish Poor, or some 18,300 Jewish Poor households of the estimated 30,600. The more select 'full-fledged Jewish Poverty Areas' overlapping with Areas just noted, include about 42% of the Jewish Poor (as against only about 12% of all Jewish households), or 12,800 Jewish Poor households.

On this basis it is apparent that the issue of service 'delivery' to Jewish Poor is complex. It will not do to look exclusively at 'obvious' neighborhoods, such as Beverly-Fairfax. Yet, reaching those Jewish Poor who are widely-dispersed (and often personally passive in search for various kinds of help) represents one of the significant challenges in this field of community planning.

Table XII: Geographic Distribution:

Jewish Poverty Indexes and Total Jewish Households
Selected Zip Code Areas, Los Angeles

| zip code area | Index A: % of AJ Committee 'aged poor' data (70) | Index B: % of Passover List (72) | Jewish Poverty Mean Index | Estimated Jewish Poor households | Criterion: % of total Jewish households - NJPS data |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Westside-Central: | | | | | |
| 90048 x | 3.2 | 5.3 | | | 1.9 |
| 90036 x | 9.0 | 12.9 | | | 5.0 |
| | 12.2 | 18.2 | 15.2 | 4700 | 6.9 |
| *Westside-North: | | | | | |
| 90046 | 5.0 | 10.5 | | | 12.7 |
| 90069 | .5 | .4 | | | .5 |
| | 5.5 | 10.9 | 8.2 | 2500 | 13.2 |
| *Westside-South: | | | | | |
| 90019 x | 3.3 | 2.5 | | | 2.2 |
| 90035 | 2.9 | 4.3 | | | 4.3 |
| | 6.2 | 6.8 | 6.5 | 2000 | 6.5 |
| 'Wilshire Area': Highland-Hoover Melrose-9th | | | | | |
| 90004 x | 1.7 | 2.1 | | | .3 |
| 90020 | 0 | .1 | | | 0 |
| 90010 | 0 | 0 | | | 0 |
| 90005 x | 2.5 | 2.0 | | | .4 |
| | 4.2 | 4.2 | 4.2 | 1300 | .7 |
| McArthur Park-Downtown Area: | | | | | |
| 90057 x | 1.9 | 3.1 | | | 0 |
| 90017 x | 1.2 | 1.8 | | | 0 |
| 90006 x | 1.5 | 1.9 | | | 0 |
| | 4.6 | 6.8 | 5.7 | 1700 | 0 |
| East Hollywood-Temple St. | | | | | |
| 90027 x | 1.5 | 1.9 | | | .5 |
| 90029 x | 1.5 | 2.4 | | | .1 |
| 90026 x | 1.2 | 1.1 | | | 0 |
| | 4.2 | 5.4 | 4.8 | 1500 | .6 |
| Central Hollywood | | | | | |
| 90028 x | 2.1 | 3.2 | 2.7 | 1000 | .2 |

* Area as a whole does not qualify as 'full-fledged Jewish Poverty Area' by present definition as either or both of Indexes A and B do not exceed Criterion % of total Jewish households, NJPS data. Area is included because of large total numbers of Jewish Poor and/or for historical reasons.

Geographic Distribution, (Con't.)

| zip code area | Index A: % of AJ Committee 'aged poor' data (70) | Index B: % of Passover List (72) | Jewish P Poverty Mean Index | Estimated Jewish Poor households | Criterion: % of total Jewish households - NJPS data |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Boyle Heights: | | | | | |
| 90033 x | 2.2 | 2.7 | 2.5 | 800 | 0 |
| Parts of North Hollywood: | | | | | |
| 91601 | 1.2 | .6 | | | .2 |
| 91606 x | 1.3 | 1.4 | | | .4 |
| 91607 | .8 | 1.1 | | | .7 |
| | 3.3 | 3.1 | 3.2 | 1000 | 1.3 |
| Parts of Van Nuys: | | | | | |
| 91401 x | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 500 | .8 |
| Parts of Reseda: | | | | | |
| 91335 x | 2.0 | 1.1 | 1.6 | 500 | .1 |
| Ocean Park-Venice: | | | | | |
| 90405 | .5 | .4 | | | .1 |
| 90291 | 3.3 | 1.1 | | | 6.2 |
| | 3.8 | 1.5 | 2.7 | 800 | 6.3 |
| Total, ** . . . . . | 51.8 | 65.4 | 58.8 | 18300 | 36.6 |

** figures on this line are not entirely internally consistent due to rounding differences.

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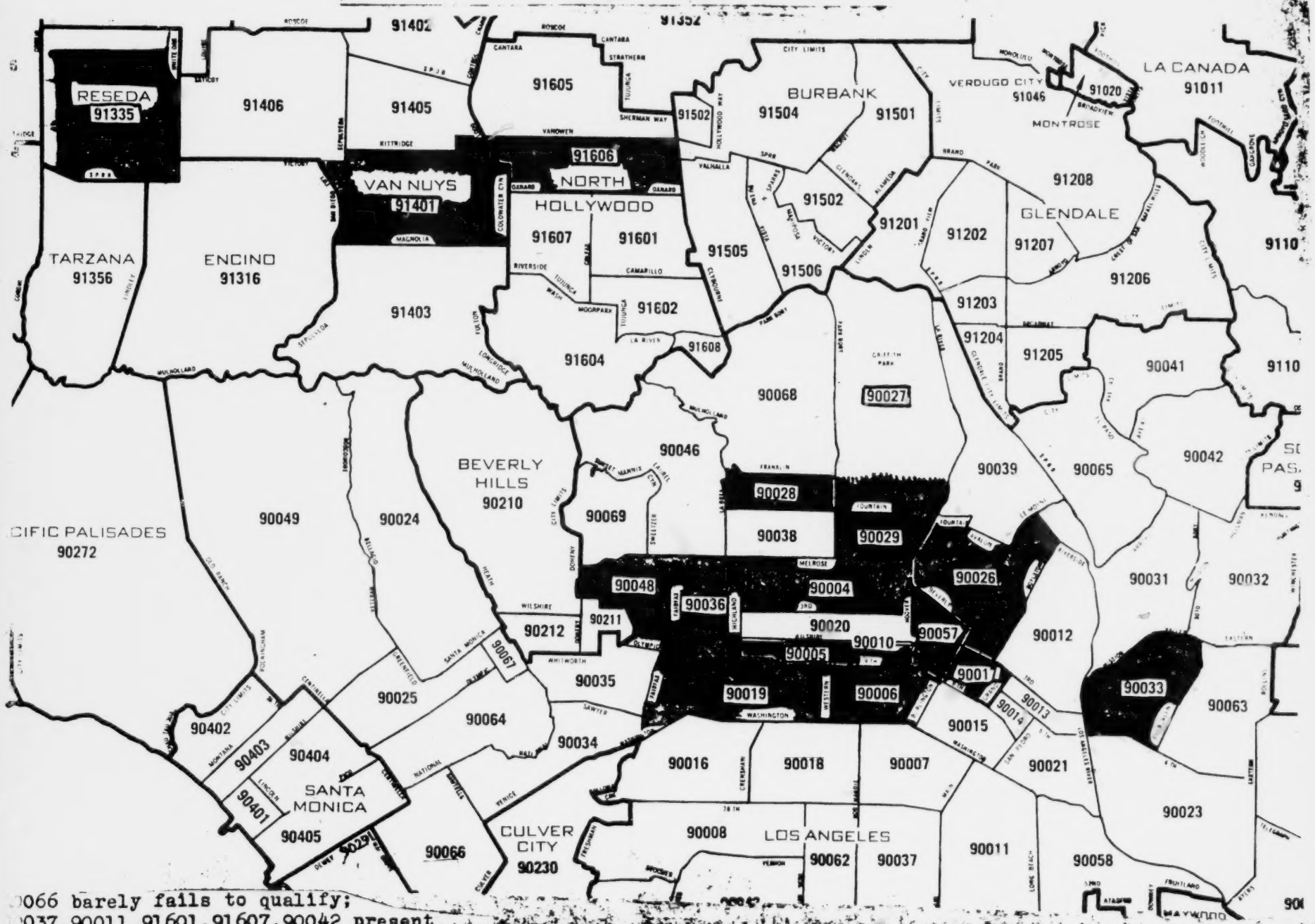
Summary: 'Full-fledged Jewish Poor Areas', (see 'x' in Geographic Distribution)

| Index A | Index B | Mean Index | est. Jewish Poor households | Criterion |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 37.6 | 46.0 | 41.8 | 12800 | 11.9 |




90066 barely fails to qualify;
90037,90011,91601,91607,90042 present
consistent